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President Sirleaf Participates in World Bank High-Level Panel on Fragility, Conflict and Violence

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Washington, D.C. – October 9, 2016: President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf has served on a High-Level Panel convened by the World Bank Group (WBG) at the WBG Headquarters in Washington, D.C. on Saturday, October 8, 2016. The High-Level Panel, which deliberated on the theme, “Preventing Violent Conflict Through Development,” was a major highlight of the 2016 World Bank/International Monetary Fund (IMF) Annual Meetings held October 7-9 in Washington. Other panelists at the forum, moderated by BBC International Affairs Correspondent Kim Ghattas, were Dr. Jim Yong Kim, President of the World Bank; Deputy UN Secretary General Jan Eliasson; Norwegian Foreign Minister Borge Brende; and Kenyan Foreign Minister Amina Mohamed. According to a



dispatch from the Embassy of Liberia in the United States, International music superstar Bono of the legendary U2 rock band, a leading global crusader for the world's poor, also spoke as a panelist by video. Mr. Bono called on the international community to institute practical actions to assist vulnerable countries build effective emergency preparedness to sustain peace and progress. Speaking at the well-attended event, President Sirleaf noted that the delay in international response to emergencies in fragile and mid-level income countries do eventually cost far more in terms of human lives lost and resources required to address the problems. More regrettably, she added, gains that are made by fragile countries such as Liberia are easily reversed as a result of inability to adequately intervene in emergencies timely enough due to lack of capacity. President Sirleaf said the cost to assist fragile countries build their emergency response preparedness would be far less, help to sustain peace and progress, and the quality of life of the people would be improved. She expressed the need for the international community to seriously begin to consider how the private sector in fragile countries can also be supported to ensure their viability during times of emergency, given that the private sector is critical in terms of jobs and availability of service for the people. President Sirleaf called upon the International Finance Corporation (IFC), a member of the World Bank Group, to provide more support to the private sector so as to avoid reverses in development in fragile countries in the event of public sector decline on account of disruptive change such as sharp decline in commodities. The Liberian Leader also reiterated a call that the U.N. should consider a percentage of assessed contributions for peace keeping for program activities that can reduce fragility. She lauded the World Bank, IMF and other international agencies for their support to Liberia, especially during recent emergencies. She urged that lessons learned therefrom should guide the urgency to assist Liberia and other fragile countries in emergency preparedness through capacity building to empower the people to take ownership as the first line of defense. Speaking earlier, World Bank President Kim said in order for the global community to realize the goal of ending extreme poverty by 2030, efforts must be made to assist fragile and mid-level income countries to develop the capacity for adequate emergency response preparedness. He mentioned Liberia as a

country that was making progress in its rebuilding process but the gains were eroded in the wake of the recent epidemic because of the country's fragility and lack of emergency preparedness. Dr. Kim said the high-level panel was convened to get the thoughts of world leaders, who are making positive impact in the world in their respective capacities, regarding how fragile and mid-level income countries can be supported in emergency preparedness to ensure sustainable peace and progress. The World Bank/IMF Annual Meetings are attended by finance ministers and central bank governors representing some 189 member countries. Liberia's Finance and Development Planning Minister Boima S. Kamara, and Governor Milton A. Weeks of the Central Bank of Liberia, who are in Washington for the WBG/IMF Meetings, also attended the High-Level Panel event. Pictures from this event follows:







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